



Northwest Regional Office

NOAA Fisheries



National Marine Fisheries Service

News Release

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***Fishery Council Recommends Boosting Coho Salmon Harvest for Oregon, Washington Fishermen;
Federal Fishery Agency Says It Will Move Swiftly to Implement Changes***

Saying it was pleased with the Pacific Fishery Management Council's recommendations for ocean salmon harvests off the coast of northern Oregon and Washington, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) said today it would move swiftly to codify the new recommendations and implement them in time for the opening of the commercial salmon season in May.

The council, at a meeting in Vancouver, Wash., last week, recommended a range of changes to the ocean-salmon harvest north of Cape Falcon, Ore., including a coho quota of 300,000 fish, more than double last year's limit of 140,000. Only marked hatchery coho can be kept.

The council also recommended a chinook quota of 124,000 fish, down slightly from last year's quota of 150,000.

Commercial troll fisheries, included in the overall allotment, have a quota of 75,000 coho (up from 25,000 last year) and a quota of chinook of 64,000 (down from 82,500 last year).

The council's recommendations for treaty Indian troll-caught quotas were 90,000 coho (60,000 last year) and 60,000 chinook, unchanged from last year.

The council's recommendations stem in part from very optimistic forecasts last month that predicted high numbers of both chinook and coho getting ready to return to their native streams and hatcheries in the Columbia River and along the Oregon coast.

"This is certainly good news for both commercial and tribal fishermen," said Bob Lohn, head of the NOAA Fisheries Northwest regional office in Seattle. "It's not a return to the halcyon days of the 1960s, but it's a trend that we hope will continue for fishermen."

In general, NOAA Fisheries biologists said, chinook returns have been up for the past two years, reflecting both healthy ocean conditions and improvements to habitat, dams and other human-caused aspects of a salmon's life.

NOAA Fisheries managers will now make sure the council's recommendations are consistent with federal law, in particular the Endangered Species Act.

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